Welcome to BOTS in 2004

by Major Dan Lonsdorf, Director WisDOT Bureau of Transportation Safety

I'm State Patrol Major Dan Lonsdorf. I took over as Director of BOTS on January 12 and have been warmly welcomed by staff, safety professionals and volunteers from throughout the state.

It's a challenging time for safety. In 2003, 840 people died on our roadways, the largest number since 1981. Fatalities have dramatically increased each of the last three years.

Why is this happening? Mostly because drivers too often don't take their responsibility seriously. If all drivers slowed down, wore their safety belts, and didn't drive impaired, then many lives would be saved.

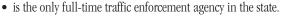
Driving safely is completely at a driver's discretion. Anyone can simply decide to slow down, buckle up and not mix driving with excessive alcohol consumption. There's nothing new about our message. But a stubborn few refuse to change. Almost one driver in three still refuses to buckle up. Average speeds continue to rise until it almost seems the legal speed limits are optional. And a disturbing proportion of drivers take to the road when they are impaired.

So our task, yours and mine, is to reach these people, to tell them in no uncertain terms that by ignoring their own safety they are also putting the rest of us at risk. To make it clear that making the wrong choices on these issues is not an option.

It's a challenge, but I'm looking forward to it. I invite you to join me. Why merge the Wisconsin State Patrol and the Bureau of Transportation Safety?

"Do I get one of those fancy Smokey-the-Bear hats?" It became a silly but oft-repeated question after the announcement that BOTS would become part of the Wisconsin State Patrol (WSP).

But Stetsons weren't part of the merger deal. Instead the merger focuses on streamlining and coordinating WisDOT safety programs. BOTS is entirely dedicated to transportation safety, and safety is the central mission of WSP. Consider this. The State Patrol:



- already cooperates with BOTS on virtually every safety program.
- is a statewide resource for crash reconstruction services for both safety analysis and court proceedings.
- does large truck safety inspections through the Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program (MCSAP).

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2004

As we look to the future

by David Collins, Superintendent, Wisconsin State Patrol



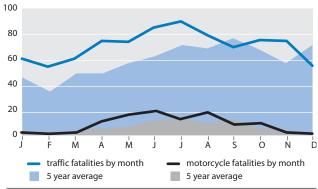
In our previous issue, we reported on the disturbing increase in traffic fatalities in Wisconsin for 2003. Contributing factors have included an increase in vehicle miles traveled, an alarming increase in motorcyclist fatalities, and our usual archenemies-

impaired driving, speeding and failure to buckle

up. According to preliminary data, Wisconsin ended the year with 840 fatalities (compared to 805 in 2002), of which 100 were motorcyclists (compared to 78 in 2002). The graph compares monthly overall traffic fatalities and motorcyclist fatalities in 2003 to the five-year averages.

For injury crashes, the news was better. From January through October, non-fatal injuries dropped 3% from the continued on page 3

2003 traffic and motorcycle fatalities vs. prior averages





State Patrol rises to the challenge

by Steve Olson

Like battlefield medics, law enforcement officers are all too familiar with death and serious injury. Nearly everyday, they see firsthand the effects of irresponsible and illegal actions that cause devastation on Wisconsin highways.

"Because we see so much needless loss of life, no member of the State Patrol or any law enforcement officer will ever accept the notion that fatal crashes are inevitable and simply a

cost of a modern and mobile society," says State Patrol Superintendent David Collins.

To combat the rising number of fatal crashes in Wisconsin, law enforcement agencies throughout the state intensified their traffic safety efforts in November and December to get drivers to slow down, buckle up and drive sober (see page 5). This included cooperative efforts combining patrols of the WSP with area sheriff's and police departments.

"Issuing more citations isn't our goal," Collins notes. "We want to convince drivers to voluntarily obey the law before someone is killed or injured."

As part of their traffic safety efforts, law enforcement worked with media around the state to reinforce the message that drivers must change their behavior to prevent fatalities. "The media responded well to our message," Collins observes, "and I'm confident that this information, combined with our enforcement and visibility on major highways, had a positive impact."

The results of law enforcement's recent efforts will be used to plan and prepare for traffic safety programs and initiatives in 2004.

"We need to attack the problem of increasing fatalities early in the year rather than wait until we are at a record pace," Collins explains. "In 2004, everyone in the traffic safety community will be focused on reducing the fatality rate, and we will do our utmost to ensure that we don't have another year like 2003."

Contact Steve Olson, WisDOT Division of State Patrol, at (608) 261-5896 or steve.olson@dot.state.wi.us.



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The Wisconsin Traffic

safety, to recognize worthwhile programs, to educate and to share ideas with safety professionals.

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Get to know... *Major Dan Lonsdorf*

Director, Bureau of Transportation Safety Wisconsin State Patrol



In January, Major Dan Lonsdorf became the new Director of the State Patrol Bureau of Transportation Safety. In his new post, he will lead the state's highway safety efforts, including the coordination of federal,

state and local law enforcement programs to reduce fatal and serious injury crashes.

Raised on a farm near Wausau, Dan served in the Army Military Police Corps as a traffic specialist at Fort Riley, Kansas. He joined the State Patrol as a trooper in 1980; during his patrols he removed from the highways over 950 individuals suspected of impaired driving. He was promoted to sergeant in 1994 and supervised State Patrol troopers in Juneau County and later Sauk County. He was promoted to lieutenant in 1998 and assigned to the patrol's state

headquarters in Madison where he managed a variety of programs including aircraft and motorcycle patrols, fleet operations and crash reconstruction services.

He earned an associate degree in police science from North Central Technical College in Wausau and a bachelor's degree in business management at Cardinal Stritch College. He also is a graduate of Northwestern University's School of Police Staff and Command. He is married to State Patrol Sergeant Shelly Hutter, who is assigned to the district office in DeForest.

State Patrol Superintendent David Collins says, "Major Lonsdorf is a well respected leader who will use his talent and experience to find innovative ways to improve traffic safety statewide and forge strong relationships with our law enforcement partners."

"This is a new era for the State Patrol and the Bureau of Transportation Safety," Dan observes. "Working together, we will continue to foster and strengthen our relationships with other members of the traffic safety community. We also will identify new opportunities and effective strategies to reduce traffic fatalities statewide. Saving lives will always be our top priority."

Contact Dan at daniel.lonsdorf@dot.state.wi.us.

As we look to the future

from page 1

same period in 2002 and 7% from the five-year average. Incapacitating injuries, the most serious, dropped 5% from 2002 and 11% from the five-year average. While this is welcome news, it also means that we were on pace for a staggering 56,000 non-fatal injuries by year's end.

Also during 2003:

- Governor Doyle signed Wisconsin's .08 BAC first offense law. In other states, passage of .08 laws has led to an average 8% decrease in alcohol-related fatalities, and for Wisconsin this would mean 24 fewer each year. (Try out the easy-to-use BAC calculator on the WisDOT website.)
- Governor Doyle also signed the "Baby Luke Law" to help address the problem of drug-impaired driving.
 The new law prohibits people from operating a motor vehicle, ATV, snowmobile or a motorboat if they have a detectable amount of a controlled substance in their blood.
- 2,000 more beginning motorcyclists received safety training in 2003 than in the previous year.
- State Patrol and local law enforcement cooperated on the most aggressive statewide effort ever to get motorists to buckle up, slow down and drive sober (see page 5). In 2003, the State Patrol issued nearly 93,000 speeding citations (up 1,100 from 2002) and 3,500 drunk drivers were arrested (up 8%). And this with an average of 12 fewer troopers available for traffic patrol than in 2002. Local law enforcement cooperated with thousands of additional arrests.
- WisDOT Bureau of Transportation Safety became part of the State Patrol, forging a stronger link between safety education and law enforcement efforts.
- WisDOT partnered with UW-Madison to establish the Traffic Operations and Safety Laboratory. Other collaborative efforts include the Resource Center on Impaired Driving, and the Deer-Vehicle Crash Information Clearinghouse.
- In Kenosha County, WisDOT opened a state-of-the-art Truck Size & Weight Enforcement Facility serving the state's most heavily traveled highway corridor.

Motorcyclists

In July 2003, WisDOT started a serious dialogue with motorcyclists to share concerns and better understand the recent sharp increase in fatalities. Contributing factors have included more riders, failure to wear protective gear (including helmets), and too many inexperienced riders. According to local motorcycle dealers, quite a few baby boomers are returning to motorcycling after many years, and some end up riding more powerful cycles than they can handle safely.

And this dialogue continues. On February 18-19 in Chicago, WisDOT and representatives of the motorcycle community met with our counterparts from the upper Midwest to identify ways to improve safety. On February 28 in Madison, WisDOT hosted the first state-level workshop to review the National Agenda for Motorcycle Safety and to see what steps should be taken.

Key challenges

To continue improving traffic safety, we need to work with many groups, including motorcyclists and both older and younger drivers. The drivers at greatest risk are the newest ones. Three years ago Wisconsin's Graduated Driver License law took effect. Preliminary statistics for 16-year old drivers indicate their crash involvement has declined significantly since the law was enacted. This spring WisDOT will release an in-depth analysis.

Wisconsin already has strong traffic laws, and our continuing challenge is to keep traffic safety a high priority for all law enforcement agencies. This will be a "given" for the State Patrol. WisDOT will also continue to conduct public information campaigns targeting specific audiences.

In the long view, Wisconsin has made remarkable progress, and WisDOT will continue to push hard to improve safety on our roads. Bottom line: it's a task too important to neglect.

State Patrol and BOTS merge

from page 1

- carries out safety inspections of school busses, ambulances, human service vehicles, motor coaches and salvage vehicles.
- evaluates and maintains breath-alcohol testing equipment and trains local law enforcement and prosecutors in its use.

Of the services provided by WSP, none is more important to traffic safety than enforcement. For BOTS it's the first time to be in such close association with an enforcement agency, an association which enhances understanding on both sides. On the other hand, BOTS has long been deeply involved in changing attitudes through public information and education which the Patrol has been able to do only on a somewhat limited basis.

It just makes good sense to have BOTS and WSP working as one. It combines these two Wisconsin safety giants under a single roof—or Smokey-the-Bear hat, if you prefer.



WMSP (Wisconsin Motorcycle Safety Program) Semi Stickers (12" x 24") are available free to trucking companies. Contact Ron Thompson, WisDOT-BOTS, at (608) 266-7855 or ron.thompson @dot.state.wi.us.

New mailing address?

Please send address updates to Judy Gelhaus at (608) 267-2470 or judith. gelhaus@dot.state.wi.us.

And let us know if you know other people who might enjoy getting this newsletter.



Two new impaired driver documents

A final report on the BOTS
Road Crew program
(including the toolkit) and
the 2003 Pre-trial Intoxicated
Driver Intervention Report
are both now available on
the WisDOT website at
www.dot.wisconsin.gov/library/
publications/topic/safety.htm



AODA (alcohol and other drug abuse) symposium

According to the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, alcohol consumption is the greatest single problem that American universities must address. And while the level of concern with alcohol abuse at the national level is high, recent data suggest that this problem is more acute in Wisconsin than in other states.

In November, the UW System hosted its third symposium to address AODA issues on its campuses. Participants included representatives from each of the system's 15 institutions, along with WisDOT, DPI and the Wisconsin Technical College System.

Participants discussed results of a system-wide AODA assessment pilot project, considered DPI's 2003 Wisconsin Youth Risk Behavior Survey, and worked to encourage reshaping of the environment in which students make decisions regarding alcohol use. Research shows that early intervention in the transition from high school to college reduces the incidence of alcohol abuse and related behavior, including impaired driving. For this reason, students' first year experience is the focal point of campus AODA prevention efforts.

Contact Evan Norris, UW System, at (608) 262-3526 or enorris@uwsa.edu.

Youth Safety Belt Award

Just in time

Elizabeth Schley, an eight-year-old from Muskego in Waukesha County, had spent the summer afternoon swimming with her older brother and her father. As they were driving home, Elizabeth, in the back seat of their SUV, realized that none of them were buckled up. She not only put on her own safety belt but she also insisted that her father and brother, who were in the front seat, also put on theirs. Five minutes down the road, an approaching pickup truck tried to pass another car and slammed head-on into the Schley's vehicle.

In the crash, the pickup driver was killed. The Schleys suffered some injuries, but Flight for Life rescue workers at the scene agreed that being buckled up had spared them more serious harm.

In November, Elizabeth, who is now nine, and her school, Mill Valley Elementary, received the first annual Youth Safety Belt Award. The award was presented by Blinda Beason from WisDOT-BOTS. Elizabeth had the right idea, she was concerned and assertive, and it paid off big time for her family.

If you would like to nominate a young person for this award, contact Blinda at (608) 264-7337 or blinda.beason@ dot.state.wi.us.



Elizabeth Schley from Muskego receives the Youth Safety Belt Award from WisDOT-BOT's Blinda Beason during an assembly at Mill Valley Elementary School.

Lifetime achievement

SADD honors La Verne Hermann



La Verne Hermann receives the SADD Lifetime Achievement Award in November.

At its annual statewide conference in November, SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) presented its Lifetime Achievement Award to La Verne Hermann in recognition of her many years of devoted service to promoting traffic safety in the state. She has been involved with the Governor's Council on Highway Safety, Wisconsin Association of Highway Safety Leaders, Wisconsin Safety Belt Coalition, and the National Safety Council.

Inspired by personal loss, La Verne knows all too well how impaired drivers affect families, friends and communities. Many years ago her brother was killed by a drunk driver, and, as she says, "it's something that never goes away."

Contact Linda Janick, state SADD coordinator, at ljanick@tmore.org.

5th Annual

Prosecutors Seminar on OWI

This program helps state and municipal prosecutors understand issues in OWI prosecution. During the November 2003 seminar, a diverse panel of speakers engaged in a lively discussion on ".08; The New Legal Limit." Moderated by the program sponsor, Nina Emerson of the UW Law School Resource Center on Impaired Driving, much of the discussion centered on whether municipalities can impose the costs that the legislature exempted for first offense convictions between .08 and .099 BAC (blood alcohol concentration).

The panel concluded that the law in this respect was not entirely clear and that other members of the judicial system and legal community needed to weigh in on the matter. Also, everyone concluded that the new law would not significantly alter the way police officers enforce OWI laws. However, on the prosecutorial end, the new law might make it easier to get convictions in borderline cases. Look for more about this and 2003 Assembly Bill 615 in the upcoming Resource Center Report (www.law.wisc.edu/rcid).

Busted!

Law enforcement officers statewide recently participated in a national mobilization to get impaired drivers off our roads. From December 19 to January 4, overtime deployments in Wisconsin resulted in over 2,300 traffic stops and 225 OWI arrests. The Wisconsin mobilization also introduced the state's

new alcohol media campaign, *Busted. Over the limit. Under arrest.* Local media and other public education efforts reinforced the statewide media campaign.

With NHTSA funding, State Patrol's Bureau of Transportation Safety (BOTS) coordinated the overtime deployments and media kickoff. "This is the first time Wisconsin has combined enforcement with a strong media message," notes Mary Miller, BOTS Police Traffic Services Program Manager.

Alcohol-related traffic crashes take the lives of impaired drivers, their passengers and other motorists. During 2002 in Wisconsin, 292 people were killed and 6, 570 were injured in 8,900 alcohol-related crashes. The annual economic loss is about \$525 million.

To sustain the momentum gained this winter, Wisconsin law enforcement will continue to conduct regular saturation deployments. "Remember," Miller says, "your best defense against an impaired driver is to always wear your safety belt and properly restrain children in your vehicle."

Contact Mary at (608) 267-3155 or mary.miller@dot.state.wi.us.



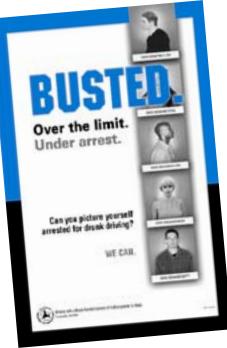
10th Annual

Traffic & Impaired Driving Law Program

Radisson Paper Valley Hotel Appleton, Wisconsin

This comprehensive program will address alcohol, controlled substance and other drug impairment. Topics will include instruction on the .08 law and the new drug-impaired driving law.

Sponsored by the UW Law School Resource Center on Impaired Driving (www.law.wisc.edu/rcid). Contact Nina Emerson at (800) 862-1048 or ninaj@wisc.edu.



Two new "Busted" posters are available, one for impaired driving and one for safety belts. See page 8.

Highway Safety Partners

This section profiles people who are helping improve traffic safety in Wisconsin. The Governor's Council on Highway Safety, a statutorily created group of legislators and others who are involved in traffic safety, provides suggestions to the WisDOT Bureau of Transportation Safety on ways to improve traffic safety in Wisconsin. Quarterly meetings are open to the public. In December, Governor Doyle appointed four new members, and here we profile two of them.

Kari Kinnard

Executive Director

MADD Wisconsin



My education was in communications and marketing, but after spending 16 years in the business world, I decided it was time for me to find more rewarding work and give back to the community. Several years and several not-for-profits

later, I found a mission that makes perfect sense to me; MADD gives me the opportunity to both work with victims and also make a difference in saving lives.

Early in my experience with MADD, a wise friend in WisDOT warned me that traffic safety gets into your blood—"it's like a disease that won't leave you." She was right; as you learn more about traffic safety, you want to accomplish more. I am now hooked on doing everything within my power to make our roads safer.

Over the past three years, MADD Wisconsin has seen tremendous growth in volunteers, chapters, activity and visibility. Our programs have grown in every one of our emphasis areas: education, victim services and activism. Our youth programs have been especially successful and well-received.

In 2003 I was honored to receive the MADD Employee of the Year Award. I am the only recipient





In May 2003, MADD placed an array of 805 pairs of shoes on the Capitol steps to represent the lives lost on Wisconsin roadways in 2002.

of this award with less than 15 years experience.

Working with MADD and all the advocates and organizations associated with traffic safety is a great learning experiencing. We have accomplished important things together, but we are all painfully aware that our work is not yet finished. I embrace the challenge of bringing more attention, education, and policy changes toward reducing the alcohol-related carnage on Wisconsin roadways.

Contact Kari at (920) 831-6540 or kkinnard@tds.net, and visit www.maddwi.org.

Sheriff Dennis Kocken



Brown County Sheriff's Department

Brown County is the heart of Packerland, and during the parade for the Packers' Super Bowl XXXI victory in 1997, Coach Mike Holmgren found himself without a coat, so he wore a Brown County Sheriff's

Department jacket. Dennis Kocken's jacket.

Raised on a dairy farm in the Town of Hobart in Brown County, Dennis joined the sheriff's department as a patrol officer at age 22. He worked his way up to SWAT team commander and then patrol captain before being elected sheriff in 2002.

"Too many people are getting killed on our roads," he notes," and we're doing everything we can to improve traffic safety." In 1999, he helped create the Brown County Community Traffic Team, with officers focusing on traffic law enforcement and education. He also played an important role in developing the community-oriented policing program which is now being utilized in three Brown County communities.

Also in 1999, the Village of Howard, near Green Bay, became home to the state's first modern round-abouts. Because there is no stopping for red lights, they have greater traffic capacity than signalized intersections, and they have also been a safety success, with the sheriff's department assisting in motorist education.

An adjunct instructor at Northeast Wisconsin Technical College for over 20 years, he teaches most areas of public safety. Dennis also recently graduated from the FBI National Academy which provides training for police executives from around the world.

He was a charter member of the Wisconsin Safe & Sober Task Force which has evolved into the Wisconsin Traffic Safety Officers Association, and from 1996 to 2003 he was a member of the Wisconsin Highway Safety Coordinators Association.

Contact Dennis at Kocken_DN@co.brown.wi.us.

The legislative approach

Improving child passenger safety

One focus of safety efforts throughout the country and in Wisconsin is child passenger safety (CPS). It is unfortunate but true that the National SAFE KIDS Campaign has ranked Wisconsin's CPS laws as among the ten least effective in the nation.

In an attempt to improve the picture, Representative Jerry Petrowski (Marathon) and a bipartisan group of legislators proposed strengthening Wisconsin's CPS laws with a bill introduced for action in the recently concluded session of the Legislature.

While drivers in Wisconsin can already be stopped for not having their children buckled up, Petrowski says the laws are weak and don't adequately protect children who have outgrown infant car seats.

The bill, Assembly Bill 724, better defines the required type of child restraint based on age and size:

- Children under age 12 are required to ride in the back seat.
- Belt-positioning booster seats are required for children ages 4-8 or about 57 inches tall.

"Children must be adequately secured, and youngsters are safest in size-appropriate safety seats and in the back

seat. Just because a toddler has outgrown a car seat does not mean they are ready to simply be buckled up with an adult-sized seat belt," he observes. "At minimum, children that have outgrown the infant car seat should be secured in a booster seat until they grow into the regular lap belt and shoulder harness combination."

The bill was also designed to help Wisconsin seek federal funding for CPS education. Wisconsin has had difficulty qualifying in the past because of the perception that our laws were too lax. The tightening of CPS legal provisions in the bill would have been a large step toward correcting this problem.

The bill did not survive the legislative process in the recently concluded session. The legislature adjourned without taking final action. However, considerable progress was made toward educating potential supporters about the issues involved and there continues to be a high level of interest in the topic, all of which bodes well should a similar bill be introduced in a future session.

Contact Dennis Hughes, WisDOT-BOTS at (608) 267-9075 or dennis.hughes@dot.state.wi.us, or call Rep. Petrowski toll-free at (888) 534-0086.



Booster seat

This is just one of many different models, and for each type the manufacturer's instructions state the weight and height limitations.

Hands on the steering wheel

10 & 2 o'clock is not the rule

by Dave Long, "The Airbag Detective"

Back when you took drivers ed, your instructor probably taught you to hold the steering wheel at the 10 and 2 o'clock positions, and the hand-over-hand method for turning. If your vehicle has an airbag, you might now want to reconsider.

Airbags deploy from the center of the steering wheel at up to 200 mph. Driving with your hands or arms over the airbag can result in hand, forearm and facial injuries from hands being thrown back violently by the bag. Drivers holding the wheel at the 9 and 3, or 8 and 4 o'clock positions are less likely to be injured this way (see photos).

This change puts the arms in a position where they can flex and helps guarantee the minimum safe 10-12 inch seperation between the airbag and the center of the chest. This is particularly beneficial for shorter drivers, drivers of larger size and pregnant women because it allows them to sit back as far as possible from the airbag.

Whenever possible while turning, smoothly shuffle steer rather than using the hand-over-hand method. Thumbs should be kept to the outside of the steering wheel (see photos). And don't forget to read the owner's manual about your car's airbags!





INCORRECT HAND POSITION

9 and 3 o'clock with thumbs out

Hands at

Hands at 10 and 2 o'clock with thumbs in

Dave Long teaches about airbags to first responders, fire-rescue, law enforcement, safety professionals and high school students. Contact Dave at dave.long@northmemorial.com or (800) 994-9780, and visit www.airbaginstitute.com.



April 7 World Health Day

Focus on Road Safety www.who.int/ world-health-day/

April Teaching Safe Bicycling

Three classes will be held during the month; check the WisDOT website (www.dot.wisconsin.gov) for dates and locations.

> May 2-8 National SAFE KIDS Week www.safekids.org

May 24-31 Buckle Up America! Week

Includes the Operation ABC (America Buckles Up Children) Mobilization, with heightened safety belt and child safety seat enforcement through the "Busted" campaign. www.buckleupamerica.org

May 10 - June 14

Safety belt mobilization

During the *Buckle Up or Pay the Price* mobilization, law enforcement agencies around the state will step up their efforts to get people to wear their safety belts and properly restrain children. Their efforts will be reinforced by a statewide media message (see poster) along with local media campaigns.

To assess the mobilization's effectiveness, observational and opinion surveys will be conducted both before and after the enhanced enforcement phase. Local 'earned media' will include events, news releases, interviews and demonstrations by law enforcement and other community organizations.

Agencies will enforce a zero-tolerance policy, with citations issued for unrestrained occupants during all motor vehicle stops. Some officers will receive training in Standardized Field Sobriety Testing, Traffic Occupant Protection Strategies, and Child Passenger Safety Technician Certification.

One in three people in Wisconsin are still not buckling up and in crashes are still being ejected, injured and killed. As of May 2003, observed safety belt use was only 69.8%, compared to the 79% national average, and 1,125 people were ejected from their vehicles during 2002. Also we have to do better keeping children safe; 2,109 child passengers ages 1-9 were killed or seriously injured during 2002.

National experience has proven that strong enforceTwo new "Busted" posters, one for impaired driving (see page 5) and one for safety belts, are available from WisDOT Maps & Publications, (608) 246-3265.

ment is needed to increase safety belt use. When people in a

community understand that law enforcement is serious about occupant protection laws, and actually witness officers enforcing those laws, they are more likely to buckle up and restrain their children. Many who don't believe they will be injured or killed in a crash do fear receiving a ticket.

WEEK 1
WEEK 2
WEEK 3
WEEK 4
WEEK 5

Pre-survey
May 10-17

Local public information/education & earned media
May 10 - June 14

Statewide paid media
May 17-31
Enhanced enforcement
May 24 - June 6

Wisconsin Department of Transportation
Bureau of Transportation Safety

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